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ABSTRACT

Developed to increase media specialists' awareness of the value of public relations to the media center program, this guide is designed to help media specialists encourage positive attitudes on the part of students, faculty, administration, and the community toward the media center, and ultimately lead to a greater understanding of the media center's part in the total educational plan. The concept of public relations is defined; checklists are provided for the evaluation of current public relations activities aimed at the user groups of students, teachers, administrators, and the community; and suggestions are presented for services and activities designed to encourage media center usage by each user group. A mediography and a listing of Department of Defense Dependents Schools (DoDDS) Media Task Group members are provided. (KM)

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August 1986

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FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL MEDIA CENTERS

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
DEPENDENTS SCHOOLS
OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR
GERMANY REGION
APO NEW YORK 09633-0005

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF
DODDS-G

Education

DSG Manual 2939.5
August, 1986

PUBLIC RELATIONS FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL MEDIA CENTERS

Public Relations (PR) for Secondary School Media Centers was developed by a DoDDS-Germany Media Task Group to foster greater awareness in the Media Specialist as to the value of public relations to the Media Center program. Public relations is a planned effort to encourage the positive attitude of students, faculty, administration, and community toward the Media Center. The development of an effective PR program will lead to a greater understanding of the Media Center's part in the total educational plan.

J. H. BLACKSTEAD
Director

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PR - WHAT IS IT?

It is showing your users what you have and what you can do. It is creating a positive image which insures the support of your students, teachers, administrators, and community.

PR - WHY BOTHER? I'M BUSY!

You know you and your program are important, but does anyone else? You need cooperation, goodwill, and support for your media program.

PR - HOW DO I START?

Identify what you are already doing by completing the PR Checklist on pages 4 to 7.

Surprise yourself by discovering you are well on the way to an effective PR program.

STUDENTS

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STUDENT CHECKLIST

- ☐ Is your Media Center an inviting place to be?
- ☐ Do you display student work?
- ☐ Have you provided space for student announcements?
- ☐ Are theme weeks an ongoing part of your Media program?
- ☐ Do the Media Center hours meet student needs?
- ☐ Is student orientation an ongoing activity?
- ☐ Is your facility available for student activities and clubs?
- ☐ Do you seek and consider student opinions and suggestions?
- ☐ Do you have materials and equipment readily available for student use?

TEACHERS

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TEACHER CHECKLIST

- ☐ Are teachers encouraged to hold staff meetings in the Media Center?
- ☐ Is the media staff aware of departmental needs?
- ☐ Do you conduct inservice training programs?
- ☐ Do you offer new teacher and substitute orientations?
- ☐ Are materials loaned to classrooms?
- ☐ Do you notify teachers of Media Center activities and services?
- ☐ Do you make teachers aware of new materials?
- ☐ Do you actively involve teachers in the selection of materials?
- ☐ Are teachers aware that library skills instruction and book talks are available?

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ADMINISTRATOR CHECKLIST

- ☐ Are your Media Center goals and objectives communicated to the administrators?
- ☐ Are your Media Center statistical reports current and available?
- ☐ Do you make administrators aware of the Media Center program and its varied activities?
- ☐ Do you routinely invite administrators to the Media Center?
- ☐ Are your administrators knowledgeable of the professional role of the Media Specialist?
- ☐ Are your administrators provided with a well defined and documented budget proposal?

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COMMUNITY CHECKLIST

- ☐ Is the Media Center news sent to the school and community newspapers?
- ☐ Do you correlate Media Center displays and programs with community activities?
- ☐ Is your community invited to participate in Media Center programs?
- ☐ Do you as the school Media Specialist participate in community and school organizations?
- ☐ Is the Media Center available for community use?
- ☐ Are you as the Media Specialist available as a community resource?
- ☐ Do you work toward active communication and cooperation between school and community libraries?

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PR - WHAT'S NEXT?

CHOOSE YOUR OWN PR ADVENTURE

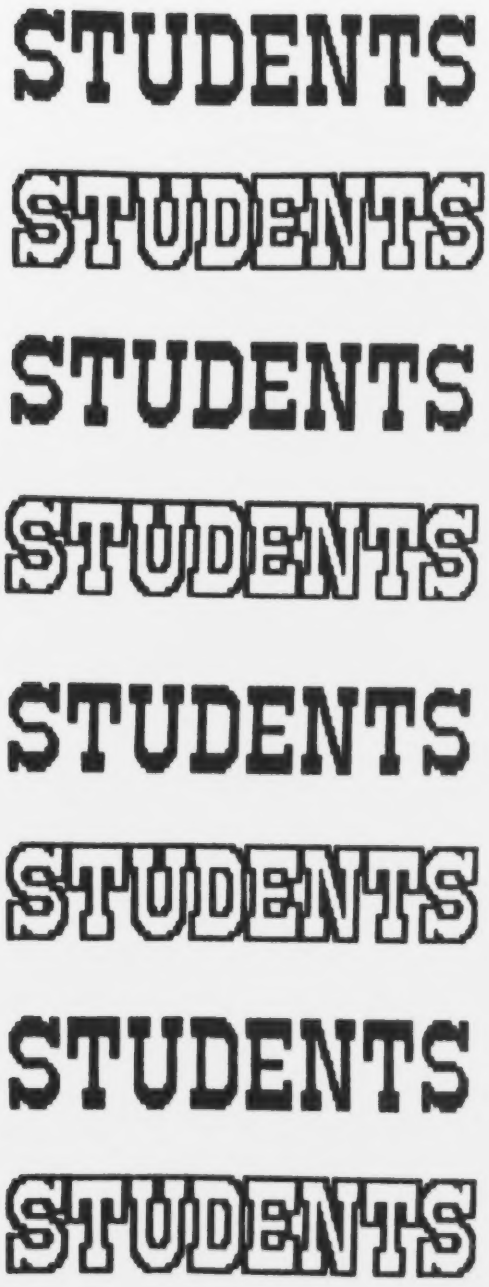
SELECT A FEW OF THE FOLLOWING

SERVICES YOU CAN PROVIDE

&

ACTIVITIES IN WHICH YOU CAN BE INVOLVED

WHICH ARE AIMED AT ENCOURAGING MEDIA CENTER USAGE BY STUDENTS, TEACHERS, ADMINISTRATORS THE COMMUNITY.



Activities

Orient new students in the use of audio-visual software and equipment as well as print materials. Use a student made slide/cassette program or videotape of the Media Center so that the program is available to all new students throughout the school year.

Host a Brown Bag Lunch Theater for students to view videos which are tie-ins with class or school projects, based on books by well-known authors or other popular themes such as "Nova" or Star Trek.

Select and Publicize a "Book of the Day" or Month. Use a student opinion poll to choose favorites.

Provide background music in the Media Center. Emphasize different styles or composers.

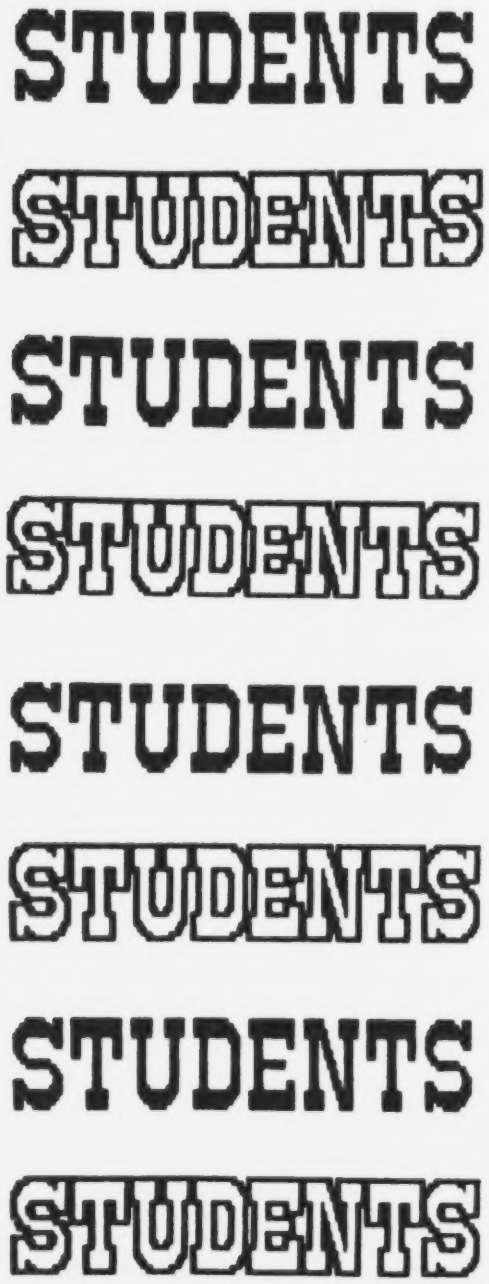
Promote theme weeks such as: Popcorn Week, National Library Week, and Native American Week through contests and bulletin boards.

Celebrate the birthdays of famous people or holidays with a party, or special publicity. Charles Darwin, Mickey Mouse, and Garfield, are good beginners.

Present book talks or software reviews on topics of local or current interest.

Compile a school scrapbook containing newspaper articles on school or community programs, memorabilia, sports' records and the like.

Sponsor "Lyrical Lunchtime Listening". Let students bring a bag lunch to eat in the Media Center. Different composers, groups, and styles could be emphasized.



Activities continued:

Promote and participate in the Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) or Bring Your Own Book (BYOB) program in your school or develop one for possible implementation.

Sponsor Media/Literary Club Activities such as: fund raisers, produce displays, bulletin boards, and design a Media Center logo, bookmarks, or flyers.

Recognize Student Aides. Use a button or badge to identify their jobs, give recognition awards, and post photographs.

Sponsor a "Word of the Day" or Month contest, program or bulletin board.

Sponsor the Media Fest for your CSA or volunteer to help out wherever it is held.

Post the honor roll prominently in the Media Center (with the names of your student aides highlighted).

Encourage student production of instructional media especially in conjunction with assignments which include presentations or oral reports.

Catalog student produced materials, then publicize them in the Media Center bulletin or display them.

Solicit student recommendations, suggestions and ideas for your Media program through a suggestion box, notebook, or ongoing list.

Conduct contests - For example: "Question of the Day", "T-Shirt Contest", or "Design a Bookmark Contest". Give books or records as prizes.

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Services

Provide a continuous supply of research outlines or guides for student use.

Provide special interest mediographies on such topics as:

- -resumes
- -planned parenthood
- -careers

Design and Organize a "What's Happening" bulletin board in the Media Center to include information on:

- scholarships available
- summer jobs
- local contests
- student accomplishments
- Blabber Board: things for sale, want ads, and messages.

Discover what freebies are available for student/Media Center use from the Post/Base Library, military recruitment centers, ITT and elsewhere. Sample items might include book jackets, bookmarks, posters, information pamphlets and brochures.

Organize student book exchanges and publicize them in the school newspaper and daily bulletin.

Arrange special Media Center displays featuring student produced

- arts & crafts
- Social Studies projects
- Science, Shop, Home Economics products and projects.

Offer to help students tape letters to friends or make a video letter to be sent to relatives or friends stateside.

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Services continued:

Attend student activities and events such as:
- Career Day
- sports events
- drama productions
- faculty-student benefits.

Provide materials/supplies in the Media Center for special class projects e.g. paper, magic markers, scissors, alphabet stencils, paints, free photocopying and laminating services.

Sponsor a book fair which involves students in the total process! Let students choose the company, order the books, produce the publicity, conduct the sales, collect the money, and pay the bills.

Provide typewriters, computers, and other equipment for student use.

Promote and Circulate reference materials for easier student use, e.g. check them out to classrooms and for overnight use.

Suggest the Media Center as the meeting room for such student activities as: Ski Club, Student Council, and Spanish Club.

Produce your own media newspaper or use the school newspaper to include lists of new materials, coming attractions, and reviews of items available for student use in the Media Center.

Activities

Host social function in Media Center at the beginning of the year to celebrate a holiday, to promote new materials now available in your Media Center, or just to bolster staff morale.

Attend Department Head meetings. (It might be a good idea to ask first, but most groups will welcome you with open arms.)

Meet with Departments on a regular basis. Also suggest the Media Center as a common meeting ground.

Contact teachers on a continuing basis during such unstructured times as in the lounge, mailroom, lunchroom, or hallways. Make a point of seeking out teachers who aren't regular Media Center users.

Involve teachers in the selection of Media Center materials by routing "Booklist", "SLj", "Book Report", and other selection aids to Department Heads or interested teachers.

Be an active part of every faculty meeting. Prepare a "Media Minute" about new and/or different materials and ideas and then get on the agenda!

Send a list of all periodicals available in your Media Center to Department Heads (or to all teachers).

Orient new teachers at the beginning of the year to include an "Open House" with displays of materials and stations to practice use of equipment.

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Activities continued:

Showcase teachers!
- remember their birthdays
- pick a "Media Teacher of the Week" or month
- publicize special things teachers do outside of school.

Publicize the Media Center by placing numerous questions and trivia that lead teachers to the Media Center for the answers. Put questions in unusual places throughout the school:
- back of the bathroom doors
- above drinking fountains
- on teacher mailboxes
- taped to the top of tables
- anywhere!

Send thank you notes for any service and support that teachers give to you or your media program.

Feed your teachers - everyone likes to eat!

Conduct a brief, general inservice program to introduce or remind faculty of the media possibilities in your school. Then follow-up with mini-media courses as needed.

Arrange to meet with teachers during their prep times to discuss their needs and concerns.

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Services

Develop a teacher interest file (for your own use) to include both the professional and personal interests of your faculty. Then notify them of any new materials in their interest areas.

Offer to present a program of your own in areas of your personal interest in the classroom, Media Center or at a club meeting.

Provide media and technical expertise to teachers doing special classroom projects.

Publicize sources of media services available outside the school e.g. USAREUR catalog, military library services and the German National Tourist Office.

Offer to train teachers' aides in the operation and use of equipment and production tools such as ditto and copy machines, transparency makers, projection and video equipment.

Offer to train substitutes in the use of AV equipment as an aid to those teachers who frequently use it.

Offer to host faculty and department (head) meetings in the Media Center. Provide a surprise snack occassionally as a come-on.

Publish a Media Center newsletter - weekly, monthly, or quarterly.

Prepare a Media handbook or folder for teacher use to include information on Media Center services, activities, procedures and policies. (It's most helpful when new teachers arrive mid-year.)

Offer to train students to provide possible video taping services in the classrooms.

Volunteer to coordinate or organize guest performers, speakers or programs in your school.

Services Continued:

Analyze the curricular needs of your faculty by subject areas in order to anticipate the media needs of teachers.

Create "teacher" coupons which are redeemable for media services, e.g. laminating, mounting posters, making transparencies, teaching lessons in classrooms. The coupons may be distributed as media-use awards for teacher-type media contests or for teacher birthdays.

Clip, copy and send magazine and newspaper articles, classroom activity ideas, recipes, and puzzles, to teachers to use with classes.

Supply teachers with ideas, materials and letters for their classroom bulletin boards and displays.

Support new teachers with extra care.

Develop a weekly or "Monthly Special". Select one topic (narrow) and pull all the print and nonprint material about that topic. Display it in a special area of the Media Center for teachers to peruse. It could be expanded to instructions and ideas for using media equipment as well as print materials.

Organize single concept "Portable Units" to include print and nonprint materials gathered for teacher use in the classroom. Milk cartons, sturdy paper or plastic bags and/or large attache cases all work well as containers.

Maintain a file of current publisher's catalogs for teacher use as well as your own.

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Activities

Make appointments throughout the school year with your administrators to share various aspects of the Media program. Use these meetings to explain and update them on the administrative side of your job (e.g. budget, ordering, scheduling, problems/plans) and the like.

Invite administrators to all special events in Media Center:

- lectures
- concerts and plays
- videos
- film festivals

Educate your administrators to note the use of Media Center materials, equipment and services in the classrooms, hallways, lunchrooms, gym - all around the school:

- Media Center books
- nonprint materials (kits, records, transparencies, filmstrips, videos)
- AV equipment
- overdue lists prominently displayed
- bibliographies
- back issues of periodicals.

Give administrators copies of all Media Center bulletins, newsletters, best-seller lists, DoDDS media news, and bookmarks. Remember to clear all bulletins you produce with your administrator before distribution.

Inform administrators of your consideration list of needed equipment, materials, and high cost items (such as videos, computers, high-speed copiers, projectors, microform reader/printer) on an ongoing basis, but particularly at budget allocation time and at the end of the school year.

Clip DoDDS-related articles from Stars & Stripes and give them to your administrator throughout the school year.

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Activities continued:

Share your professional view points with your administrators through copies of related journal articles. Keep 'em brief, but keep 'em coming!

Develop a local Media Center handbook.

Develop a brief "Here's How We Do It" Media Center handout for substitutes.

Offer to orient substitutes on the use of AV equipment.

Send information to administrators about the Media Center via attention getting devices such as a shiny red apple, on balloons or paper airplanes, as a singing telegram or a video.

Attend and Participate in extra-curricular functions whenever possible. A little extra interest in the total school program never hurts.

Present your Media Center budget to your administration before school fund allocations are made so they are aware of your needs as they plan the school-wide budget.

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Services

Tell your administration you are willing to serve on committees and/or attend extra-curricular events.

Prepare and present periodic reports of Media Center activities to your administration on any of the following:

- Media Center usage by students and faculty
- new acquisitions
- statistical information
- narrative of activities
- special projects, displays, exhibits

Sponsor a guest lecturer, a school play or musical event.

Volunteer to make the Media Center available for faculty meetings, department meetings, administrative conferences, PTSA or SAC.

Offer to prepare audio-visual materials for administrative uses. Suggest such things as:

- laminating services
- poster preparation
- transparency production
- slide/tape usage

Offer to provide your administrator with reference and research service whenever needed or requested.

Become involved in your professional organizations. Let your administrator know of your involvement. Publicize yourself as well as your program.

Anticipate the audio-visual needs of your administrator for local workshops, meetings, and conferences.

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Activities

Initiate publicity for your Media Center via ongoing updates in the local post/base newspaper, Regional publications, school newspaper, and parent newsletter.

Involve your community in Media Center sponsored activities such as a Fun Run, a Hot Air Balloon Release, or National Library Week. Solicit parent volunteers, community organizations or military units to co-sponsor the project.

Sponsor a Book Fair through the PTSA or Booster Club. Remember to involve community volunteers in this venture.

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Services

Be Active and Visible in your community. The OWC, Booster Club, German-American Clubs, NCO/OWC Bazaars or Volksfests might be places to start.

Be Active and Visible in school related community organizations such as: SAC, Town Hall meetings, PTO or PTSA. Offer to explain your program and ask to be placed in the agenda whenever needs or problems arise. Be sure to clear it with your administration first.

Identify yourself whenever attending any of these functions as the Media Specialist from the school. Remember to do so in an out-going, positive manner.

Initiate contact with your base/post libraries.

- Ask your base/post librarian participate in school orientation.
- Develop a plan for film/video interlibrary loan.
- Make them aware of special school assignments.
- Support their reading promotional and other programs.

Volunteer space in the Media Center for announcements of community activities which affect students and teachers, for example,

- exhibition of art work and crafts
- displays for energy conservation, Black History Month, Law Day, or Fire Prevention Week.

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TASK GROUP

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